

# THEY COULD HAVE OVERRULED THE EMPIRE AS FATHER AND SON

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Howard Graham Buffett and Bill Gates receiving the World Food Program's 2011 George McGovern Leadership Award. The antiwar principles of McGovern and Buffett's grandfather Howard Homan Buffett, or the resource-sharing hacker culture denounced in Gates's [An Open Letter to Hobbyists](#), might have enabled the world's hungry to feed themselves. Public domain.

Warren Buffett's father should have changed *Radical Son* David Horowitz's red diapers.

At first glance, Horowitz's vehement rejection of his card-carrying Communist Party upbringing to become an equally unwavering Grand Old Party loyalist, from voting for Ronald Reagan's re-election right up until his passing on April 29, would seem the mirror opposite of the path to Buffett's retirement a week later. Six decades after inheriting the Berkshire Hathaway he would nurture into a trillion-dollar conglomerate from a Republican congressman deemed "arch-conservative" in his *New York Times* [obituary](#), Howard Homan Buffett's son had become the sort of capitalist who could not only be commended by *Times* guest essayist Roger Lowenstein for having "long stood out on Wall Street because he eschewed its frequent chicanery, self-dealing and greed" ("[Taking the Measure of Warren Buffett](#)," May 5), but gladly cited as a role model by *It's OK to Be Angry About Capitalism* author Bernie Sanders.

Yet the *Times* acknowledged that the "arch-conservative" had urged "curbs ... on the United States military leadership," anticipating Dwight Eisenhower's better-remembered caution to "guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence ... by the military-industrial complex." E. J. Dionne, Jr. observed in *Why Americans Hate Politics* that "New Left scholars ... took a much more favorable view of the old isolationists such as Robert A. Taft" and Buffett "than liberal scholarship ever had" — and that Students for a Democratic Society president Carl Oglesby had quoted Buffett on how "we cannot practice might and force abroad and retain freedom at home."

Dionne's caveat that "the New Left's attack on large corporations was not a cause to which conservatives repaired" is hard to maintain when a devoted Ayn Rand fan like Roy A. Childs, Jr. could note in the May 1972 issue of *Libertarian Forum* not only the validity of "students' reactions to Dow Chemical's presence on campuses across the U.S., at the time when Dow's own napalm was being used to zap Vietnamese peasants" but that law-and-order dismissals ignored how "so-called 'private' universities ... seize land from its rightful owners by aligning with the State's power of eminent domain."

One of those "New Left scholars" was none other than David Horowitz. The back cover of Ronald Radosh's *Prophets on the Right: Profiles of Conservative Critics of American Globalism* includes a blurb from the Horowitz who would later coedit *The Anti-Chomsky Reader* lauding its "understanding of the imperial dynamics of America's postwar course" underneath Noam Chomsky lamenting "how much has been lost by narrowing the spectrum of debate" when such a "critique of ... the centralization of state power was perceptive at the time, and has much to offer to us today."

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## PUBLICATION/CITATION HISTORY

1. "[They Could Have Overruled the Empire as Father and Son](#)" by Joel Schlosberg, CounterPunch, May 9, 2025
2. "[Opinion: They could have overruled the empire as father and son](#)" by Joel Schlosberg, Newton, Iowa Daily News, May 13, 2025
3. "[They could have overruled the empire as father and son](#)" by Joel Schlosberg, PCM Explorer [Prairie City, Iowa], May 15, 2025 [Page 4 of print edition]